

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 OMB-01 SAJ-01 NIC-01 ACDA-19

GAC-01 CIAE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 RSR-01 NEA-10

TRSE-00 /137 W

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R 281445 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8412

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

SECDEF WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 4854

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, UR

SUBJ: CC PLENUM SHAKES UP POLITBURO, BOOSTS BREZHNEV'S
FOREIGN POLICY.

1. SUMMARY: IN FIRST MAJOR LEADERSHIP SHAKEUP SINCE THE MID-
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SIXTIES, PARTY PLENUM UNDERLINED BREZHNEV'S DOMINANT LEADERSHIP

POSITION AND UNEQUIVOCALLY ENDORSED HIS " PEACE PROGRAM." THE DROPPING OF SHELEST AND VORONOV AND POSITIVE TONE OF CC RESOLUTION ON FOREIGN POLICY CONSTITUTE THE MAIN EVIDENCE OF BREZHNEV'S VICTORY. HE MAY HAVE LIMITED HIS FREEDOM OF POLICY DECISION IN THE FUTURE, HOWEVER, BY BRINGING INTO POLITBURO GROMYKO, WHO CAN SPEAK WITH AUTHORITY ON FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF MILITARY AND SECURITY FORCES (GRECHKO AND ANDROPOV). FOR TIME BEING, HE CAN PRESENT IT AS STATESMAN-LIKE MOVE TO UNIFY FORMULATION ANDIMPLEMENTATION OF FOREIGN POLICY. U. S. IS NOT MENTIONED IN RESOLUTION, BUT ANTICIPATED SUMMIT IS UNSPOKEN REALITY HANGING OVER PLENUM AND WE BELIEVE IT IS NO EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT BREZHNEV HAS BET HIS POLITICAL FUTURE ON GOOD U. S.- SOVIET RELATIONS. DOMESTICALLY, IT IS PREMATURE TO JUDGE WHETHER HAVING POLITBURO MEMBERS HEADING FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTRIES AND KGB AS WELL AS MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE WILL SERVE CURRENT ANNOUNCED GOAL OF REINFORCING PARTY CONTROL OVER LEADING GOVERNMENTAL ORANS, OR TEND AS IN STALIN' S TIME TO STRENGTHEN HAND OF GOVERNMENT APPARATUS. END SUMMARY.

2. MAJOR LEADERSHIP SHAKEUP OCCURED AT APRIL 27-28 CC PLENUM WITH PYOTR SHELEST AND GENNADY VORONOV BEING DROPPED AS FULL MEMBERS OF POLITBURO. PLENUM ELECTED KGB CHIEF ANDROPOV, FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO AND DEFENSE MINISTER GRECHKO FULL MEMBERS OF POLITBURO WHILE LENINGRAD OBKOM FIRST SECRETARY ROMANOV MOVED INTO POLITBURO CIRCLE AS CANDIDATE MEMBER. POLITBURO NOW HAS MORE FULL MEMBERS (16) THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE BEFORE DEATH OF STALIN. (PROBABLE REMOVAL OF PELSHE IN THE FUTURE WOULD REMOVE PRESENT THEORETICAL DANGER OF A VOTING DEADLOCK.)

3. PLENUM ACTIONS CLEARLY UNDERLINED BREZHNEV'S DOMINANCE OVER HIS " EQUALS" IN PRESENT LEADERSHIP CONFIGURATION WHILE PLACING SEAL OF APPROVAL ON HIS IMPLEMENTATION OF PARTY'S " PEACE PROGRAM." DUMPING OF SHELEST AND VORONOV, ALLEGEDLY IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR RETIREMENT (ALTHOUGH THEY ARE YOUNGER THAN SIX OTHER MEMBERS OF POLITBURO) REPRESENTS REMOVAL OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE, BY ALL AVAILABLE EVIDENCE, DISAGREED WITH SOME ASPECTS OF BREZHNEV' S POLICIES IN PAST, BUT WHO HAVE REMAINED ON POLITBURO AS POTENTIAL THORNS IN CONFIDENTIAL

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HIS SIDE AND NUCLEI OF OPPOSITION. REMOVALS ARE RESULT OF GRADUAL PROCESSES WHICH SAW SHELEST AND VORONOV LOSE THEIR POWER BASES, THUS MAKING THEM PRIME CANDIDATES FOR LATEST ACTION. (STRONGEST CLUE THAT SHELEST WOULD BE REMOVED AT PLENUM WAS ARTICLE IN LATEST ISSUE OF " KOMMUNIST UKRAINY" -- NOT YETA AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY -- PERSONALLY CRITICIZING HIM FOR NATIONALIST TENDENCIES.)

4. BREXHNEV MAY HAVE BEEN OBLIGED, OR FELT IT WISE TO PAY A

PRICE TO OBTAIN REMOVAL OF SHELEST AND VORONOV BY AGREEING TO BRING INTO POLITBURO GROMYKO, WHO NOW CAN SPEAK WITH INCREASED AUTHORITY ON FOREIGN POLICY, AND ANDROPOV AND GRECHKO, WHOSE CONSTITUENCIES POTENTIALLY VIEW GENERAL DETENTE WITH GREATER SKEPTICISM THAN OTHER SEGMENTS OF SOVIET SOCIETY. WE WOULD JUDGE, HOWEVER, THAT GRECHKO AND ANDROPOV (APPOINTED TO GOVERNMENTAL POSITIONS BY BREZHNEV) ARE PRESENTLY HIS ALLIES; FURTHERMORE, DAO FEELS THAT GRECHKO DOES NOT COMMAND STRONG POWER BASE IN HIS CONSTITUENCY. WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF GROMYKO MAY HAVE BEEN DIFFERED WITH BREZHNEV AT TIMES OVER TACTICS AND PACE OR DETENTE POLICY, WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE MFA IS OPPOSED TO DENTE POLICY PER SE.

5. ELEVATION OF ROMANOV TO CANDIDATE MEMBER STATUS GIVES VOICE TO LENINGRAD ON CENTRAL PARTY BODY. ROMANOV' S ELEVATION MAY HAVE CONNECTION WITH RECENT INDUSTRIAL DECREES SINCE LENINGRAD AREA HAS BEEN IN FOREFRONT OF EXPERIMENTATION ON NEW MANAGEMENT POLICIES.

6. CC RESOLUTION AT PLENUM ON FOREIGN POLICY IS NOTE WORTHY ON SEVERAL COUNTS:

- A. EMPHASIS ON BREZHNEV' S PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION TO IMPLEMENTATION OF 24 TH CONGRESS POLICIES.
- B. CHARACTERIZATION OF " IRREVERSIBLE CHARACTER" OF SOVIET " PEACE PROGRAM," AND THE IMPORTANT ROLE IN THIS PROCESS WHICH WILL BE PLAYED BY CONTACTS OF LEADERS AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL. (US IS NOT MENTIONED DIRECTLY IN THIS OR ANY OTHER CONTEXT.)
- C. USUAL BOW TO " LIBERATION" STRUGGLE AND NEED FOR VIGILANCE AND READINESS TO REBUFF " ANY ATTEMPTS OF THE AGRES-

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SIVE, REACTIONARY CIRCLES OF IMPERIALISM."

D. STANDARD FORMULATIONS ON MAINTAINING UNITY OF SOCIALIST STATES, DEVELOPING ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND MAINTAINING MILITARY MIGHT OF WARSAW PACT. SEPARATE PASSAGE ON POLITICAL-IDEOLOGICAL UNITY OF COMMUNIST MOVEMENT INCLUDES UNEXPLAINED EXPRESSION OF READINESS TO PARTICIPATE WITH OTHER FRATERNAL PARTIES IN " CONCRETE MEASURES" TO THAT END (POSSIBLY AN ALLUSION TO EVENTUAL CONVENING OF NEW WORLD CONFERENCE OF COMMUNIST PARTIES). PARAGRAPH CRITICIZING CHINESE LEADERSHIP FOR ANTI- SOVIET, ANTI- DETENTE AND ANTI- WORLD- COMMUNISM POLICIES MERELY CONCLUDES THAT CPSU WILL CONTINUE 24 TH PARTY CONGRESS LINE CHINA.

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PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 RSR-01 NEA-10

TRSE-00 /137 W

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R 281445 Z APR 73
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8413
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MOSCOW 4854

E. GEOGRAPHIC RUNDOWN OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY SKIMS
LIGHTLY OVER INDOCHINA, EUROPE (WITH BARE MENTION CSCE),
" ISRAELI AGGRESSION," COOPERATION WITH STATES OF ASIA, AFRICA,
AND LATIN AMERICA.

F. NOTABLY ABSENT ARE FORMULATIONS ON THE IMPORTANCE
OF IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE BOTH ABROAD AND AT HOME WHICH WERE
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PROMINENT IN LAST COMPARABLE CC RESOLUTION ON FOREIGN POLICY
(NOVEMBER 1971) AND WERE EMPHASIZED EDITORALLY BY MILITARY
NEWSPAPER " RED STAR" AS LATE AS APRIL 24.

7. IMPLICATIONS OF THESE CHANGES FOR SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY IN SHORT RUN ARE CLEARLY POSITIVE. BREZHNEV LEADERSHIP IS NOW COMMITTED MORE INEXTRICABLY THAN EVER TO POLICY OF DETENTE, AND LEADERSHIP CHANGES -- PARTICULARLY REMOVAL OF DISSIDENT VOICE OF SHELEST FROM POLITBURO -- SHOULD CLEAR THE WAY FOR BREZHNEV TO HAVE HIS WAY IN CARRYING OUT THIS YEAR'S EVENTS, INCLUDING VISITS TO THE FRG AND THE U. S. THE LEADERSHIP CHANGES ALSO, HOWEVER, BRING INTO THE POLITBURO THE VOICE OF TRADITIONAL DIPLOMACY (GROMYKO) AND VOICES WHICH COULD IN THE FUTURE SPEAK OUT IN THE HIGHEST LEADERSHIP COUNCILS ON BEHALF OF ENTRENCHED BUREAUCRACIES WHICH FEAR THE EFFECTS OF DETENTE (GRECHKO AND ANDROPOV). HAVING STRENGTHENED THE BUREAUCRATIC POSITION OF THESE KEY INTEREST GROUPS, BREZHNEV MAY FIND IT MORE DIFFICULT TO PUSH CONTROVERSIAL FOREIGN POLICY DECISIONS THROUGH THE POLITBURO. INDEED, THIS MAY HAVE BEEN THE CALCULATION OF SOME SUPPORTERS OF THE NEW APPOINTMENTS. THE DANGER WOULD BE PARTICULARLY ACUTE IN THE EVENT BREZHNEV'S POLICY. ESPECIALLY VIS- A- VIS THE U. S. , SUFFERED A SPECTACULAR SETBACK. NEVERTHELESS, WE ASSUME THAT BREZHNEV IS SATISFIED THAT THE PRICE HE HAS PAID IN BRINGING IN THESE NEW PEOPLE IS MANAGEABLE. HE CAN PRESENT HIS ACTION AS A STATESMANLIKE MOVE, SERVING TO UNDERSCORE BOTH THE DEPTH OF SUPPORT FOR DETENTE POLICY AND HIS INTENTION IN THE FUTURE TO UNIFY THE FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF FOREIGN POLICY.

8. ON DOMESTIC FRONT, LONG- TERM IMPACT OF LATEST MOVES IS DIFFICULT TO ASSESS AT THIS POINT. CLEARLY THEY REFLECTED CULMINATION OF LONG DRIVE AIMED AT CLEARING AWAY OPPOSITION TO SUCH CHANGES AND ERODING STRENGTH OF THOSE WHO OPPOSED BREZHNEV'S LINE OF LEADERSHIP. PAST SEVERAL MONTHS HAVE SEEN CONCERTED EFFORT TO BUILD BREZHNEV'S IMAGE AS WITNESSED BY MEDIA COVERAGE, EXCEPTIONAL OBEISANCE TO BREZHNEV'S PRIMACY PAID BY DEFENSE MINISTER GRECHKO IN HIS REPORT TO THE ALL- ARMY CONFERENCE OF PARTY ORGANIZATION SECRETARIES ON MARCH 27, AND PERSONAL ACTIVITIES, PARTICULARLY IN DEALING WITH FOREIGN
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9. INCLUSION OF FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTERS AND KGB CHIEF ON POLITBURO RETURNS TO PATTERN OF HAVING POLITBURO OFFICIALS ALSO HEAD MINISTRIES WHICH WAS USUAL IN STALIN'S DAY. AT THIS JUNCTURE WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT LOYALTY OF THESE INDIVIDUALS TO BREZHNEV LEADERSHIP, AND WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE ANY MAJOR CHANGE IN DOMESTIC POLICIES. IN STALIN'S DAY, PRESENCE OF MINISTRY HEADS ON THE POLITBURO TENDED TO STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF THE GOVERNMENTAL APPARATUS VIS- A- VIS THE PARTY. PRESENT MOVES HOWEVER COME AT TIME OF PROPAGANDA STRESS ON THE NEED FOR PARTY TO EXERT ITS LEADERSHIP. WITHOUT WISHING TO MAKE DIRECT PARALLEL WITH SHORT- LIVED

PRESENCE OF MARSHALL SHUKOV ON POLITBURO IN 1957, WE WONDER WHETHER LATEST CHANGES MAY NOT AGGRAVATE QUESTION OF PARTY VERSUS GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIP WHICH HAS BEEN SIMMERING IN THE BACKGROUND.

10. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT IN OFFICIALS ANNOUNCEMENT OF PLENUM DECISIONS GROMYKO IS LISTED AHEAD OF GRECHKO, ALTHOUGH ALPHABETICALLY THE LISTING SHOULD HAVE BEEN REVERSED. WORTH WATCHING WILL BE PLACEMENT OF BREZHNEV' S NAME IN ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HIS PCITURE NOW THAT ANDROPOV, AHEAD OF BREZHNEV' S ALPHABETICALLY, HAS MOVED TO FULL MEMBERSHIP IN POLITBURO. (AFTER PLENUM ANNOUNCEMENT, GRUMBLING WORKERS DISMANTLED HALF- FINISHED DISPLAYS OF POLITBURO MEMBERS, WHICH INCLUDED VORONOV AT SEVERAL LOCATIONS.)

11. COMMENT: IN SUMMARY, EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT LATEST RESHUFFLE HAS SIGNIFICANTLY STRENGTHED BREZHNEV' S HAND AT AN IMPORTANT JUNCTURE IN HIS LEADERSHIP. HE EMERGES WITH MANDATE TO CARRY FORWARD PARTY' S PEACE PROGRAM, WITH WHICH HE IS PERSONALLY ASSOCIATED, AND WITH SUPPORT FROM KEY CONSTITUENCIES OF SOVIET SOCIETY. WHILE THE SHORT TERM IMPLICATIONS FOR BOTH FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES APPEAR CLEAR, LONG- TERM SIGNIFICANCE OF ADDITION OF NEW FACES TO POLITBURO IS MORE DIFFICULT TO ASSESS. WHILE OPPOSITION HAS BEEN WEAKENED, FORCES WITHIN TOE POLITBURO CAPABLE OF SERVING AS EFFECTIVE CHECKS ON BREZHNEV' S LEADERSHIP SHOULD THE NEED ARISE HAVE BEEN AT LEAST POTENTIALLY STRENGTHENED, PLUS PLACING CERTAIN LIMITS

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ON HIS FREEDOM OF ACTION.
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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR, PINT
To: BELGRADE
BERLIN
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